Rainforest Text Set

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Topic: Rain Forest

Description of the Unit: The students learn about the locations of the rain forests, the different layers of the rain forest, the animal and plant life in the rain forest, and why rain forests are helpful to our environment. This text set will be an expansion of the unit that I’ve done in the past, since I previously taught 1st grade and next year I will be teaching 3rd.

Grade Levels: 3rd (can be adapted for younger or older grades)

Objectives:

* To help students understand that trees help our environment and are important to our lives.
* To help students understand the locations of rainforests.
* To examine the layers of the rain forest, along with the plants and animals.

Texts

Cherry, Lynne (1990). *The Great Kapok Tree, a Tale of the Amazon Rain Forest*. Harcourt Brace: USA

This is a terrific book that our Title 1 teacher reads every year. It is about a young man who is told to cut down a Kapok tree. Because the tree is so big, the man gets tired and falls asleep. While sleeping, animals of the rain forest talk to him and explain their reasons for not wanting the tree cut down. At the end, the young man does not cut down the tree.

Craighead, Jean (1995). *One Day in a Tropical Rainforest*. HarperCollins*:* New York

I still read chapter books to the class after lunch, just as a way to get back into “school mode”. This will be a book that I will read when we begin our unit.

Olaleye, Isaac (1994). *Bitter Bananas.* Boyds Mills Press:

This book is about baboons who are stealing sap that a young boy sells. The boy then hatches a plan to stop the baboons from stealing the sap.

Geisel, T. S. (1971). *The Lorax*. Random House: New York

I absolutely *love* this book! It’s important for the students to understand why we should preserve the rainforest…it is the habitat of many animals and plants that we don’t find anywhere else.

Yolen, Jane (1993). *Welcome to the Green House*. Scholastic: New York.

This book is full of colorful illustrations and shows many different plants and animals that make the rainforest their home. I read it every year when we do our rainforest unit.

Teacher Resources

*The Big Book of Thematic Plays* (2000). Scholastic, Inc.: US

*Ossie and the Clever Kinkajou* adapted by Robin Bernard.

The animals in this play can all be found in a tropical rain forest. This play is one that can be the culmination of the rain forest unit.

*Ecology Thematic Unit* (1991). Teacher Created Materials, Inc.: USA

This book is full of art activities, science experiments, math problems, and writing activities that pertain to the rain forest.

Websites

All of the websites below have pictures, information, and activities about the rainforest.

[http://www.rainforest-alliance.org/education.cfm?id=**ki**dsmain](http://www.rainforest-alliance.org/education.cfm?id=kidsmain)

<http://www.rainforestanimals.net/>

<http://www.kidssavingtherainforest.org/main.html>

<http://www.rain-tree.com/schoolreports.htm>

<http://www.prekinders.com/rainforest_kids.htm>

<http://www.rainforestplace.com/>

<http://www.pbs.org/journeyintoamazonia/index.html>

<http://www.sandiegozoo.org/animalbytes/e-tropical_rainforest.html>

Videos

Kinkajou-Rainforest Animals (2008) retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6isit0-xLYE> . This YouTube video is a short clip about the Kinkajou, an animal that is native to the rain forest. I chose this clip to give the students some background knowledge about what the kinkajou looks like. This would be shown before we began the reader’s theatre, Ossie and the Kinkajou.

Rainforest Animal Slideshow (2008) retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eshSDOYL5A0> . This YouTube video shows several of the animals from the rain forest that we will be learning about during our unit study. This video would also be shown prior to beginning the unit to give the students some background knowledge.

National Geographic Costa Rica Canopy Tours retrieved from <http://video.nationalgeographic.com/video/player/places/regions-places/central-america/costarica_costaricacanopytours.html>

This video shows the canopy layer of the rainforest. Since the canopy is one of the layers that we will be discussing in class, I thought that this would be a good clip to show the students.

My plan is to implement this unit of study in the spring and have it last up to one month. I am planning on incorporating the rain forest across the curriculum…not only in science or social studies. We will also do math activities, reader’s theatre and art activities.